Othello and Emilia Galotti: A Comparative Study

by Ellen Pendleton

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by

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Othello and Emilia Galotti: A Comparative Study.

It is but natural that in considering the foremost representatives of the Teutonic drama one should at once think of Lessing as the name in all German literature to be placed beside that of our own Shakspere, the acknowledged master of dramatic art in modern times. Not that Lessing's dramatic work surpasses the products of his great successors Goethe and Schiller as Shakspere's dramas surpassed any earlier or later attempts in English literature, but that besides being the producer of the first German dramas of note and as the father of dramatic literature in Germany standing for much that Shakspere stands for in ours, he has done much of preëminent importance to Germany and of universal value in the way of formulating and interpreting the principles of dramatic art to which Shakspere gave practical expression in his dramas.

To Germany this work of promulgating and propagating the Shakesperian theories of the drama was even of greater value than the dramatic work that Lessing produced. It brought about the breaking away of the German drama from French models and the return to a proper interpretation of Aristotle. To his criticism of the drama, appearing chiefly in his "Hamburgische Dramaturgie," we owe to a large extent the later development of the dra- German drama. In view of all this, - of his distinguished and peculiar position in the literary history of Germany, of the high excellence of his dramatic productions and their representatively German spirit and art, -- a study of one of his dramas in connection with one of Shakespeare may be interesting not only for the insight thus obtained into the methods of two great artists and their relations one to the other, but also for the idea such a comparative study of representative men of the two nations may give of the two literatures and socially

of the drama, its technique, and its significance and use as interpreted by the Teutonic people.

Perhaps there is no dramatic work of Lessing's that seems more truly in the spirit of Shakspere than his great tragedy of Emilia Galotti. In many important features it suggests the play of Othello and the two dramas are similar enough in dramatic development to make the comparison of the two an interesting and profitable one. That Lessing was an admirer of the Shaksperian plays we know from his own statement but that he premeditatively or even consciously modeled his Emilia Galotti upon Othello it is unnecessary to assume nor is it within the purpose of this paper to attempt to prove.

It is frequently observed that a great writer need not be a great inventor; that great writers are often great simply because of their quickness in recognizing the value of the material at hand. Shakspere, we know, originated

very few of his stories of his plays, and in perhaps no other case more than that of Othello has he met the accusation of plagiarism. The story of the Moor of Venice had been published in Sicily by Giraldi Cinthio, an Italian novelist half a century before Shakespeare's play of Othello appeared in England. The Italian writer furnishes practically all the details of the story:

A fair Venetian woman attracted by the excellent qualities of a Moor falls in love with him and marries him notwithstanding the attempts of her relatives to dissuade her from it. Everything goes happily however, until the Moor receives a commission which forces him to set sail at once from Venice. He is pleased at the honor thus conferred upon him but dislikes to leave his gentle wife. At her earnest request he finally decides to allow her to go with him. All would have been well again, had not a certain ensign of the Moor's, a handsome but evil-hearted man also accompanied them. His wife is a friend of Desdemona, the Moor's fair wife is called. This ensign conceives a

mad love for Desdemona, but unable to win any recognition from her he immediately gives himself over to as ardent hate and resolves to take revenge upon her. An opportunity suggests itself when the Moor cashiers a captain for striking and wounding a soldier on guard and Desdemona, believing the punishment too severe, with purely human interest appeals to her husband in the captain's behalf. The ensign takes occasion to throw suspicion upon Desdemona and make false accusations to the Moor concerning her. To increase the Moor's misgivings he steals a handkerchief of Desdemona's and causes the Moor to find it on the captain's bed. The former is thoroughly incensed by this line and together with the ensign plots the captain's and Desdemona's death. The ensign attacks and wounds the captain in the dark and kills Desdemona with a stocking filled with sand. To conceal their crime the Moor and the ensign pull down the ceiling over Desdemona's body to

make it appear that she was killed by accident. The Moor, however, at once becomes frantic with remorse and degrades the ensign and drives him from him. The ensign takes revenge by revealing the Moor's crime to the captain who makes accusations to the authorities. The Moor is arrested, tortured, and banished and later killed by Desdemona's relations.

This brief review of Giraldi Cinthio's novel shows that Shakespeare was greatly indebted to the Italian writer for his material, yet one would scarcely wish to read the famous drama if one's acquaintance with the Italian novel were one's only introduction to the play. The story seems to border on the sensational and to recommend itself to one's attention rather for its novelty than for any moral interest that it contains: the characters have nothing in common with the ordinary reader and excite little sympathy or interest. It is, moreover, stiffly

told. There is free play of fancy in the combination of the details of the narrative, but little use of imagination in the presentation of the characters. We see no delineation or thoughtful appreciation of character. The personages of the novel are introduced to us by the aid merely of a few descriptive adjectives.

Shakespeare has not troubled himself to change very materially any of the details of the story, but he has recreated and breathed life and character into the nameless, soulless figures of the Italian novel. Desdemona, whom we can hardly have patience enough with to pity when we see her in Cinthio's story, we learn to love in Othello as a woman of strong, gentle character; human in its tragic weakness, faithful in its nobility. And then, the savage hero — no longer merely "the Moor" has become, through the dramatic Shakespere, our most noble Othello, one of the most completely conceived characters of fiction. Again, the benign, uncommon brute, in whom no humanness

appeals to our human sense to awaken sympathy, whom not even the monstrosity of his villainy could recommend to our interest, appears before us no less a villain but a man still — with such splendid powers that we stand aghast at the boldness with which he spurns the restraining influences of faith, love, and honor and watch with awful interest the demoniac power that forces him along his horrid course. The lesser characters of the drama owe practically nothing to the novel.

In a similar way Lessing is also indebted for the story of his Emilia Galotti to an earlier writer. The old Roman story of Virginia was his first inspiration. The use, however, that he has made of this material, is, as with Shakspere in the case of Othello, entirely different from the use originally made of it. The political interest of the story is entirely removed. Lessing deemed the complication with state-affairs unnecessary to the tragic

value of the deed. He believed the father's high regard for the virtue of his daughter motive enough to cause him, in order to preserve it, to take her life. And upon this idealistic conception he based his play. At first thought, therefore, it might seem that Lessing had departed farther from his original than Shakspere. Lessing has, moreover, moved his characters wholly out of the old environments. Emilia is not the Virginia of Roman literature; she is a girl of Lessing's own nationality, placed, however, not in Germany, but at the court of an Italian prince in the time of Louis XIV. Both plays have thus an Italian setting, but neither can be said to show any distinctively Italian characters or scenes. Shakspere's characters, although supposed to represent certain nationalities, have no distinctively national characteristics. Desdemona might as well be thought of as an English girl

as a Venetian, and Othello is intelligible without a study of the peculiarities of that Moorish nature. Probably out of political reasons Lessing deemed it prudent not to place the scene of his drama in Germany. He did not wish to appear to make an attack upon German princes or to imply that Germany had such counsellors as Marinelli. Yet the character which he wished to represent as his tragic hero was most truly German in spirit and sentiment, a German biedermann of the staunchest type, and it is a German idea of marriage that underlies the plot.

[1] Lessing does not make it clear that we are to consider Emilia and her father as foreigners at the court of the Italian prince. The idea is, on the contrary, that the Galotti home is in the country and in order that the daughter may have the advantages of a respectable culture, at the insistent request of the mother

Outside of setting Lessing can hardly be said to owe less to the Roman Virginia than Shakespeare to the Italian novel. As we have seen, it is merely the basis of the tragic action that Lessing makes use of in his Emilia; moreover, he has not only taken this out of its former relations but has modified it quite materially, having removed from it all political or civil interest. But Shak-

the father had permitted mother and daughter to come to the city to partake of the gaieties of court life. It was only on account of difference of natural disposition that the father entertains so hearty a dislike of the prince. Odoardo knows the prince as a sensuous, pleasure-loving man, lacking in the staple virtues of true manhood that Odoardo himself with strictness lived and believed in. The fact that he contested the prince's rights to Sabionetta was merely incidental as far as he was concerned. Therefore it is not clear that Lessing intended to represent his hero and heroine as Germans. But they are German in spirit.

sfere, on the other hand, has not merely modified the tragic motive but has practically supplanted the motive of the novel by one of another kind, one far more refined and noble. The hero of the Shakspere drama is actuated by a motive very similar to that of Lessing's hero. Under the beguiling influence of that foul demon Iago, transformed into an angel of light, Othello, who we know to be, like Odoardo, the strictest in morals and the most innocent of vice, impurity and untruth, is made to believe in the falseness of his true wife and to fancy that he must take things into his own hands and vindicate his honor. Under this horrid illusion thinking himself the administrator of justice he crushes out the life of the one dearest to him on earth in order to expiate the supposed outrage against his own honor and to prevent a continuation of crime. [O. Act V, Sc. II, ll. 6 and 20-22.] Odoardo and

Othello both are moved to their horrid acts by a highly ideal conception of the sanctity of the marriage bond and the inviobility of their own honor and that of those dearest to them. In the story of Virginia Virginius was actuated to take the life of his daughter by a desire to save her honor and freedom which were attacked by Appius Claudius, but he doubtless saw moreover in such a deed not only the only means of rescuing his daughter from disgrace and shame, but also a way of rousing the people to active revolt against the tyrannical government of the haughty decemvirs and thus a means of freeing the people from the hated rule of the oligarchists. As a Roman father he had the right of life and death over his daughter, and as a father he owed her protection, and the only protection possible appeared to be death from his own hand; as a patriot

he owed his country protection although protection of his country demanded the sacrifice of his own daughter. His action results as he anticipated. His deed is followed by a popular uprising which results in the overthrow of the decemvirs. His honor is vindicated and he is esteemed by his Roman compatriots as a hero of heroes.

No such duplicity? of motives enters into the act of Odoardo. He is ~~indifferent~~ to the praise or the condemnation (Sp.) of the people; he sees only the ruin of his daughter — his daughter's own half confession of weakness [See E. G. Act V, Sc. 7, Emilia's longest speech] intensifies his fear for her and in the agony of the moment he can see no sure escape for her other than the one she suggests. He picks the rose lest the storm scatter it, and trembles when he sees the stem is really broken. Brought, however, before that licentious egoist, upon

whose head must be not only the blood of Asperiani, he is ready to answer for his share of the crime not only before the earthly court of justice but likewise before the awful Tribunal of Justice Eternal.

Othello, blinded by that ambassador of Satan to believe a lie and made to feel himself the executor of justice, seems to take a mad pleasure in the exaltedness of his assumed office. Angry beyond measure he commits the deed in a fit of torturing madness — but angry with that kind of anger that is softened and tempered by love until it is more than half sorrow, not like the cruel, hot-tempered Moor of Cinthio's novel, whose anger converts him into a heartless, bloodthirsty wretch, who murders with the coolness of a professional executioner. The deed done, the Othello of the tragedy is again unlike the Moor of the

novel. The latter is represented as becoming frantic with remorse over his horrid crime and with the loss of her who had been his life and happiness, receiving in this unhappy state of mind what the author understands to be his just recompence of reward. That the Moor learns of the entire innocence of his wife, however, which in justice ought to be added to complete his just misery, the author does not state, although he seems to think that he has made a sufficiently miserable end to such an undeserving brute. Othello, on the other hand, after the deed is done, is as a candle with the light gone out; he remains but the wreck of the manhood that he once was - more sane, if anything, than before the act of murder, but in a sad calm that is many times more piteous than his fere-

vious raging, a calm that fills our hearts with aching. Still, after he judged her in his own private court of justice, put her to the test and found her guilty — though he called in only false Iago and himself as witnesses — and executed the penalty of death upon her, still he can not cease to regret that the fearful knowledge ever came to him and took away his very best and dearest in life.

Sc. II. "Had she been true,
If heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I'd not have sold her for it."

Odoardo, horrified at first sight at his monstrous crime, is upheld by the confidence that his deed has really rescued his innocent daughter and that he bears the lesser responsibility for the crime. Othello, however, is allowed but for a moment the satisfaction of contemplating his crime as an act

to which justice forced him; the testimony of Emilia quickly reveals how easily he has been led astray and how fearfully mistaken he has been: sacrificed his priceless pearl. He had doubly erred. He saw all clearly at last. Yet he would not be understood to be what he was not — an ordinary impulsive passionate man who gives himself over to jealousy, whose suspicious nature believes to find every act prompted by impure motives, untruth and infidelity. He was

"one not easily jealous, but being wrought
Perplexed in the extreme,"
and naught he did

"in hate, but all in honor."

Yet he himself would "nothing extenuate" and self-condemned he executes upon himself the sentence of death.

In Othello there is not the rush-

ing to make a villain of a respectable man that we feel in Cinthio's Moor of Venice. Even apart from Shakspere's fuller delineation of character by which he shows the character of the Moor noble while Cinthio merely describes it as such, and his consequently greater success in presenting his character before us the fact stands that Shakspere does not exhibit such extremes of virtue and vice in the Moor as does Cinthio. He does not permit Othello to sink to such great depths of degradation as does the Italian novelist; he does not permit Othello to lose all the manhood of his nature: it is not, after all, the more vulgar passion of jealousy alone that arouses the indignation of the hero; possibly it would be difficult for any person to preserve himself free from any feeling of jealousy whom he was put under so severe a test, but Othello

was more deeply stirred than he could be by a mere feeling of anger at seeing something shared and enjoyed by another, which was rightfully his own. His moral code was simple but fixed. He loved the truth, reverenced purity and regarded it his sacred duty to preserve his honor inviolable by a punctilious observance of both. His varied life had not been one that begat experience in dealing with the matter-of-fact things of daily life, experience in dealing with men, with the wrongs and sins of perverted evil-minded men. It had prepared him for "feats of broil and battle", for "most disastrous changes", for "moving accidents by flood and field", for "hair-breadth escapes", but experience in

"antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven"

did not prepare him to meet the cunning

and treachery of deceitful men. Therefore Othello was vulnerable in just the point in which Iago attacked; but this weakness merely permitted Iago to attack him, it did not give him chance completely to overthrow Othello's manhood. This Othello is as different from Cinthio's Moor as Lessing's Odoardo is from the Roman Virginius — in another way, to be sure; but both are original.

The similarity between the tragic motives of the two plays has now been pointed out, both being, as we have found, the desire to protect the honor of the characters involved. It is this which constitutes the strongest similarity between the plays in point of subject matter.

It is also notable that the relations between the leading personages are of a kind. According Aristotle's famous dictum tragic events

can not occur between indifferent persons. In the tragedies which we are studying the tragic events disturb the most sacred relations of the home: the relation of father and child and husband and wife. In both cases the perpetrator of the deed acts upon full knowledge of the identity of the victim; with this difference only: Odoardo knows the innocence of Emilia and acts not from any idea that she deserves death; Othello, on the other hand, although he undertakes the deed with the full knowledge of upon whom he administers death, acts under the mistaken idea that his victim is guilty and merits the death which he inflicts. In both cases, the hero is driven to the tragic deed through the machinations of a villain wishing to attain the ruin of the betrothed husband of the girl

who is sacrificed. In Emilia Galotti the attack of the villain is not made against the leading personage of the play, that is, the tragic hero. In Othello the villain is seeking the overthrow of the hero himself, and the wife in whom the hero's all is sunk is the convenient means by which the villainous purpose is accomplished. In ~~each~~ ~~play~~ the girl seems a wholly indifferent person to the villain who is willing to use or to sacrifice her to attain his end. In Cinthio's novel the villain is at first motived to the ruin of the Moor by love of Desdemona with whom he has become passionately enamoured; but Shakspere does not make use of this feature in his play.[1]

[1] I do not agree with those who find in Iago's motives in plotting Othello's ruin an in-

This detail of the Italian story reminds us of the part played by the Prince in Emilia Galotti, where the Prince

gredient of jealousy because of a personal passion for Desdemona. A jealousy he had, I grant, but not a jealousy of love — he knew no love, and this inherent lack was not even replaced by a coarse sensual passion. Iago was jealous, and jealous, too, of Othello; he may even have been jealous because Othello had won a wife whose sweet charms, rare beauty, and brilliants not even Iago could not fail to feel but this jealousy was prompted by no desire to possess Desdemona. He was practically indifferent to Desdemona, as he was to any woman, in fact. If to this sure all things are future, the reverse is equally true and is especially applicable in this case. Moreover, we are most jealous

as the instigator together with Marinelli, the abominable planner and executor, take the part played by Iago alone in Othello. The Prince, though sensual and covetous, is not represented as at heart a bad-intentioned man, but

of him who possesses what we want for ourselves. Therefore if we admit that Iago had no desire for Desdemona, as we surely must admit, it seems to me when we consider what contemptible opinions he had of women in general and in particular, we can certainly find here no ground for his jealousy; his own expressions, however, give us sufficient clew as to what was the real cause of his jealousy, although a more extended study of his temperament and character may be necessary to explain the extent to which the passion carried him.

controlled by his passion which soon makes him insensible to all but it he quickly reaches a point where the sacrifice of an innocent person is nothing to him as long as that person stands in the way of the satisfaction of his passion. The Iago of the novel is unscrupulous from the beginning, a born knave for whom the gallows would be none too good at any point in his career. Shakspere chose to use just such a kind of villain in his drama; for it was not a part of his purpose in this particular play, - as it seemed to be Lessing's in the portrayal of the Jew, to represent the gradual development, from first inception, of villainy in a man who gives himself over to self-indulgence. Villainy he shows here in its developed form and along side the character of a nobleman

played upon by villainy's fingers. He mingles light and darkness only that he may at the end sound the call, "Let there be light!" and the light may ascend out of the darkness and those that have sat in darkness may perceive the light.

So much may be said of the material of the plays. But what of its dramatic value? We condemned the barrenness of the Italian narrative and were almost ready to turn our backs on a tale so fanciful and untrue. But what shall be said of Othello? What is more natural than the sweet, simple courtship of Othello and Desdemona of which we get but a delightful glimpse in the drama? But the whole story can be supplied from that glimpse. A Moor in Venice ennobled but unassuming virtues has by his manly valor won confidence and esteem and, as a mark of these positions

of trust and honor in the state. Even the venerable old senator Brabantio welcomes him as a frequent guest in his home. Many a pleasant hour does the Moor beguile for him with stories of "broil and battle", and Desdemona, busy about her household duties, steals ever more often a moment from her work to listen "with greedy ear" to the wondrous tales her father's friend relates. The Moor himself at length observes from time to time the eager but timid interest with which the girl tries to catch all that she may of his conversation. On a time, by chance, he finds his friend Brabantio not at home and Desdemona alone about her work. He tarries for the very pleasure of talking with her, secretly hoping that she will ask him to tell his story and deftly shifting the conversation to give her opportunity to ask him to tell her all his story. The request ~~came~~ as expected, "a

ferayer of earnest heart" that he would

"all his filgrimage dilate,
Whereof sbg fareels she had something heard,
But not intentively;"

came so naturally and sincerely that he re-
sponded with more enthusiasm than usual.
What a pleasure to relate his story to such
a listener! And what wonder that her naive
remark at the end if he

"had a friend that loved her,"

he "should but teach him how to tell his story.
And that would woo her"

emboldened him to speak, who otherwise
would never have ventured to have thought
himself accefetable. He saw her love, and
his own, now unchecked, flowed out to
meet it. Asvooing so simple was perfectly
in keeping with his natural frankness
and modesty, just as such a love as
hers, instead of being strange and
"against all rules of nature" as it appeared
to her obtuse father, was perfectly in keeping

with the simple, sympathetic, earnest heart of Desdemona; which, untrammeled by a coarser sense, perceived and responded to only qualities of soul. What is often referred to, in the lines above cited, as the boldness of Desdemona, a quality that is as foreign to her modest character as a similar boldness on the part of Othello in making a proposal without such a hint would be to him, is a slanderous failure to appreciate her character. Othello, indeed, refers to her remark as a hint and for him it was a hint, that is, it was a revelation to him which led him to think that she would not be offended by a proposal from him; but she did not intend it as a hint or think that it might be construed as such. In her innocent enthusiasm over his adventures the words came to her and she spoke them impulsively before

she realized that they might carry more meaning than in calmer mood she would care to divulge. Even Othello understands perfectly that it is a wholly unintentional self-betrayal on the part of Desdemona, although he refers to it as a "hint", what it was in reality to him. That the proposal, on account of Othello's natural unobtrusiveness and small esteem of self, as well as the external barriers of difference in "nature, years, country, credit, everything", would have probably never taken place without this alleged boldness of Desdemona does not make her any the more responsible to the charge.

The discovery of Desdemona's love was enough for Othello, but he had no reason to think that it would be for Brabantio. Anything else, or anything that concerned himself alone he would have doubtless been willing to have yielded

up to the wishes of his friend, but for the sake of Desdemona he conceded the right of Brabantio to tyrannize over his daughter, and Othello did not need to be told that the old senator would offer no objection to the billet and the marriage of his daughter to a swarthy Moor. He knew that Brabantio could be won over by no argument, and "rude in speech" and "little blest with the soft phrase of peace" he shrank from any such fruitless parleying. But one course remained open to him, if he did not wish to cause a general outbreak and commotion only finally to be separated from Desdemona; quietly to take his bride and boldly face the consequences. And Othello takes Desdemona to himself. Brabantio, roused by that villain already on the warpath against the Moor, has longer no mind for state affairs, but almost insane with the slanderous

tidings that Iago through the mouth of Rodrigo delivers to him he rushes out into the darkness to bring to punishment the shameless Moor. But taken aback by the testimony of Desdemona herself, in gentle dignity confirming the words of Othello, her acknowledging husband, and convinced, even against his will, of the pure means and pure motives of Othello, he retires, forced by his own declaration to yield the combat, a defeated, grief-stricken man: others may now to affairs of state; he betakes himself guiltily to his deserted home.

Iago is defeated; the newly wedded pair return to their conjugal happiness, their union recognized and approved by the state. But jealous Iago is not satisfied with defeat: the frustration of his scheme simply arouses his villainy to new bitterness.

How gladly would we draw the curtains now and shut out the painful

scenes which follow! But not so; already we see the forces in action which must undermine and fell what now stands so nobly and grandly - forces dark and threatening, forces of evil lurking and subtle. Iago, the embodiment of omnipresent evil which is ever ready to attack where its claws may find a hold, is there to turn the presumption of the good Othello to his ruin. Who has not gloried in self-righteousness? who has not trusted in his own strength? and who can see the imminent destruction of mighty Othello and not be moved with pity and fear? It is no ordinary passion that stirs Othello's soul; for it is no ordinary soul that thrills with that passion. He knows not the petty storms that disturb the spirits of common men. Greatness marked every quality of his noble character. But lo the mighty is fallen! Once "being wrought" he was "perplexed in the extreme", all the depths of his jealous nature vibrating with the shock, and he

knew not the reach of his greatness.

Laying aside the more difficult questions that the character of Odoardo presents as tragic hero of the play of Emilia Galotti, one can not but be impressed by the sweet homely beauty and truth of the characters and scenes of the play. The conception of the character of Emilia is especially sympathetic and true. She is not made to appear too saintly: her devoutness is not inconsistent with the weakness which she shows in accepting her mother's easy-going policy of a judicial use of deception instead of open and strict honesty; she had felt herself thoroughly sincere in her devotions; before the trial came she did not know that she could be so easily found vulnerable.

Many who to-day believe themselves perfectly sincere are yet to experience trials which may prove them weak. Must we of necessity discredit their present professions of sincerity? They are sincere now

as far as their knowledge of sincerity goes. Yet fuller light may come and they may not live up to it. It is not an unnatural inconsistency in Emilia's character that she is saintly devout one minute and the next under the presence of a great temptation she is consenting to what her better nature tells her is a compromise with truth; it is human. It is so much easier and pleasanter to withhold the truth[1] from her betrothed, and the very fact that her first impulse is to go to him with the whole story is proof of the natural nobility of her character. When, however, the Templer hushes her compunctions with "Honor thy father and thy mother," she is quite ready to renounce responsibility in that way. It is no new

[1] The question of Emilia's relation to the prince has called forth much interesting discussion. It is not necessary that we settle the

story; on the contrary so old and familiar that every reader's thoughts are directed homeward and he is filled with pity and fear. Although but a trifle it seemed to Claudia and a matter of probable insignificance to

question in order to appreciate Emilia's part in the play; whatever her feelings toward the prince were, it was her evident desire to be true to the count. It seems reasonable to suppose that the simple little girl had much of her mother's fondness for ranks and royalty together with her father's high ideals of love and honor and manhood, and that the attentions of the prince quite overcame her so that she no longer felt sure of herself; she did not wish to renounce the true Appiani but she felt a drawing to the prince which she dared not acknowledge even to herself and knew not the meaning of, and she feared his power over her. Such a conception of the girl makes clear her readiness to accept her mother's advice to keep the affair secret from Appiani

Emilia, it was no small matter at stake. Not only was Emilia doing injustice to Asperini who had a right to know what Emilia withheld from him, but she was defying the eternal law of truth which at one time or another will execute its certain punishment upon those disregarding its sovereignty. Not Emilia alone fell victim to its remorseless law. Desdemona, we remember, by a free open confession in regard to the handkerchief, might have prevented the horrid tragedy. The magnitude of this action, in both its origin, with its inevitably fatal consequences and its noble victim equals, if not transcends, in great tragic

and her father — a matter which it would have been very hard for her to speak of — and make her character all the more lovable that she was at first brave enough to think of making a clean breast of it all to Asperini.

significance, that of the main action itself. From this standpoint the calamity of Emilia Galotti is wholly satisfactory: a noble victim is sacrificed, but the supremacy of truth is asserted. From this point of view the manner of the death of Emilia is not a matter of moment. For all practical purposes Emilia is dead from the time of Appiani's death when she realizes her great guilt, just as Othello ceases to exist from the time that he learns of Desdemona's innocence: the end comes as a relief. Must we look at the play from the other point of view, the motiving of the calamity is less clear and the result less satisfactory: Odoardo lacks the strength of character that we admire in Emilia; his ideals are lofty but he yields too weakly to the cunning of his

enemies, and we are not content with a tragic hero whose ruin we can attribute only to his lack of virile courage.

Not only the persons of the heroes and heroines have our poets vested with greatness. Marinelli and Iago have something splendid in their villainy. The brilliance of their schemes and the keenness with which they execute them lead one almost to believe them possessed of supernatural powers of evil. They plot the ruin of noble Affiani and noble Othello and Affiani and Othello lie ruined at their feet. Ruined; yes! But is it triumph that we read in Marinelli's „Weh mir!", words that seem involuntarily to escape his lips? Is it triumph that closes the mouth of Iago, which even the torments of Giraldano can never force open?

Our poets have not presented the triumph of evil over good: on the contrary goodness is justified and evil condemned; while the prince's passion and selfishness leads him ever farther into crime until it proves his own destruction, Emilia's purity and strength of character leads her out of the mire into which she stumbled and exalts her in the end.

The plays of Othello and Emilia Galotti have a general similarity of dramatic structure. Both fall under that class where the first half of the action is given over into the hands of the counterplay, the hero'

' In the case, of course, I am considering the tragic characters as the heroes, which is, it must be thought, as the dramatists intended. No one can doubt that Othello was meant to be the chief personage

being represented as in comparative guilt, although we soon see forces at work

of Shakespeare's drama, since it is on him that our interest centers. A little more hesitancy we might have as to the play of Emilia Galotti. The title character at once suggests itself as probably the one conceived by the author to be the chief character, but there are other objections to this view than Lessing's own direct statement to the contrary. It is well to keep in mind that Lessing's original plan was to represent a father having so high esteem of honor that in order to preserve his daughter's unstained he was willing to take her life. In such a conception as this the father is naturally the character of chief interest. Odoardo, moreover, as the one who undertakes active opposition, as the one who reacts, the one

which are conspiring to bring him out of this quiet. The counterplay is

in whom the struggle takes place, must be regarded as the hero of the play. Emilia as the comparatively passive victim. The action of the counterplay, however, it is true, is not directed against Edoardo with malice & forethought, at least, as it is in the other play against Othello. No personal feelings on the part of the Prince toward Edoardo, notwithstanding that he does cherish a hearty dislike for the outspoken colonel, actuate his attack upon the Galotti family: his passion for the daughter not only renders any other motive unnecessary but absolutely removes the possibility of her entertaining any other. In Othello the conspiracy of the counterplay is directed toward Othello himself, his ruin involving merely incidentally the sac-

set in action by passions which have lain dormant sometime in the hearts of the chief actors on the side of the aggression,

rifice of Desdemona. In Emilia Galotti, the impelling force of the prince, in whose interest the conspiracy is conceived although he is only indirectly responsible for the form it takes, is so far as may be impersonal in his aim; that is, his action is directed rather against existing circumstances or impending events than against any particular person: Appiani whom the prince's action is intended most to affect, is even a more indifferent person to the prince than is Odoardo; in fact I find no passage in the play which indicates that Hettori is sensible of even a jealous hatred of Appiani. Appiani appears to him but an external hindrance to the enjoyment of his passion.

the passion of love on the one hand and the passion of hate[1] on the other, and these passions are brought to a head in both cases by a wedding. In

[1] It may be noted here that the Iago of the novel is represented as actuated chiefly by his infatuation for Desdemona Shakspere, however, does not make much of this motive, although he permits Iago to allege his love for Desdemona as partly his motive [Act II, Sc. I, l. 278], but only half sincerely. Shakspere would give to Iago no such mollifying feature the foul egoistic knave has no room in his corrupt heart for love of any kind; even the thought of conceiving him as a father was rejected by Shakspere, as has been justly observed, because with paternity we always associate the idea of tenderness and Shakspere would remove every suggestion of such a quality in his villain. Ab-

one case, however, the wedding, or rather the announcement of it, is the exciting force and is the immediate cause of the action, while in the other it furnishes opportunity for the counterplay to act but this preliminary action does not belong to the main plot. The action is therefore more precipitate in the former, external

though Iago alleges a love for Desdemona, it is by no means an actual motive for his attack upon the Moor: he makes no effort to obtain possession of Desdemona nor can we believe that even if he had at first been actuated by a passion for Desdemona and seeing himself repulsed had turned from love to hate he would have taken the course he did, for his attack is plainly directed against Othello, not against Desdemona, though it includes her in its sweep; it is upon Othello that he practices his torture and Othello's suffering that gives him his heinous delight.

things beyond the control of the counter-plotters bringing affairs to a crisis and the tumult that precedes the climax being brought more suddenly to a height than in Othello where no violent action precedes the climax, but where Iago's injection of poison given in gradually increased doses gradually increases the suffering until the writhing victim madly takes things into his own hands.

Edoardo has only a vague sense of approaching trouble up to the attack upon Asperini and his fear is during this time wholly intuitive, while Othello is from the first directly affected by the action of the counterplotters and once set upon is in a state of keenest suffering to the end of the play. For this reason Shakespeare's play is more painful than Lessing's. Emilia, it is true, is, like Othello, more directly affected by the counterplot therefore

having more foundation for her apprehensions than her father, but upon the assurances of her mother seems to yield them up as groundless. We as sympathizing spectators, therefore, suffer with Othello throughout four long acts; but in Emilia Galotti where the action is more hurried we do not enter fully into the feelings of Odoardo or of Emilia - their fears seem exaggerated and we fail to be convinced of approaching calamity; it is only when the climax is reached and we begin to see the result of the action of the counter-players that we appreciate the painfulness of their situation.

The delicate work of introduction is accomplished in Emilia Galotti by a pure situation scene in which the chief characters are presented in their various relations; in Othello by a scene at once full of action and intrigue, though

not, however, as we have seen, a part of the plot action proper. Iago has Roderigo alarm and arouse Brabantio simply as a part of his plan for the overthrow of Othello. Angered that the Moor has preferred Cassio before him and that he is forced to serve under him and jealous of the Moor's rise in power and honor, Iago determines to have satisfaction on the Moor. The elopement of Othello with Desdemona furnishes the first opportunity for attack. If he can arouse Brabantio's wrath against Othello and blast his hopes by a separation from Desdemona and bring him into disgrace before the state, his purpose is accomplished. Now had the affair not terminated so favorably for Othello, if Brabantio had not been convinced that Desdemona had voluntarily left her father's house to become the wife of the Moor, Iago would have had his satisfaction and the action would have had its end here.

Failing in this, however, he quickly matures a second plan, which is the plot proper of our drama. The first does not belong to the main action of the play and is in place in the drama only as it affords a convenient introduction inasmuch as it gives opportunity for the presentation of Othello in his manly purity before the Iago-injected poison of suspicion has diseased his whole system. If Shakspere had not seen that he could thus use this first plan of Iago's to advantage, he would hardly be justified, on grounds of unity of action, in introducing it into his play, since it does not lead up to the final catastrophe.

As it is, however, the act instead of violating the unity of the play, prepares the spectator in the most effective way for the appreciation of what follows. This act is virtually a character-sketch and a situation scene. Our sincerest admiration is

awakened for the noble Othello and the gentle Desdemona. Of Iago, the hero of the first half of the play, who here takes the lead, we have a very complete picture - his character, his relations to Othello, and his motives and purposes are made clear. We have also, on the one hand, Othello's declaration of faith in his wife, and on the other Iago's villainous plot for overthrowing that faith, degrading Othello's lieutenant Cassio and securing his envied place.

This time a more fiendish attack than before is planned against Othello. Before, Iago expected to disturb only the outward circumstances which would permit Othello to enjoy his love; this time he plots an attack on the love itself, intending not merely to prevent Othello from the enjoyment of his love, but to turn that very love into hatred and bitterness. This

time he will plume up his will in double knavery. This plot involves, along with the ruin of Othello, the undoing of Cassio whose lieutenantship Iago would have bestowed upon himself.

What has been given in this first act is quite necessary for the spectator to know in order to understand the significance of the whole play. It is prerequisite that we know the character of Othello before it had been tampered with by Iago. We could omit the first act as far as the story of Othello's elopement with Desdemona and Brabantio's complaint against him is concerned, but we could hardly forego the insight which this story gives us into the character of Othello, Desdemona and Iago.

In order to introduce this bit of narration Shakespeare had to open

his story the night before the incidents of the ~~plot proper~~ take place. A French writer in the same case might have obviated this difficulty by the awkward but convenient circumlocution of putting the story of the elopement into the mouths of some character. And why should not Shakespeare serve himself of some similar device? He might at least thus save himself the accusation of a violation of unity of time and word off any waste of words over his observance of the unity of action. Shakespeare, however, feared neither the first nor the second, or he had greater regard for his drama than to be willing to kill its spirit by a conformity to arbitrary rules. For this reason Shakespeare chose that even his exposition should be dramatic. As much advantage therefore as the dramatic form has over other literary

forms in presenting life so much advantage has Shakspere's method over whatever other methods might be chosen.

It is filling moreover, that the play which is so full of action and intrigue should have an introduction, which, being itself full of action and intrigue, is suggestive of the tone of the whole piece. To see Iago means to see Iago in action. No scene or situation that had Iago as an important figure could be a passive one. The Iago of the drama is tireless in the production of evil and no representation of him could be adequate which did not show him actively engaged in the plotting of evil. True without the first act one would soon have a fair introduction to this inherent characteristic of his nature, but to know that his action in the play is not

his first sin - and more than all to see the hardness of heart and stubborn villainy with which he goes about it is a more eloquent introduction to his deviling in the scenes that follow than could otherwise be devised.

It is just the lights and shadows that Shakspere cast upon the scenes of the act & the exposition that make the play proper of value to us. It is in the light & the conception of Othello that we form on seeing him face the insulting voices & Brabantio's men before the duke and the senators that Shakspere wished us to interpret the Othello & the last act. It is the gentle dignity & Desdemona as she modestly vindicates her husband in the presence of the duke, her father, and the assembled senators that wins our love and prepares us in the most effective way for the play proper.

In view of the introduction of Othello, the introduction of Emilia Galotti is remarkably void of action. It is composed of pure exposition scenes. The first scenes up to the introduction of the exciting force in the middle of the sixth scene is devoted to the presentation of the character of the Prince, who, like Iago, has control of the first half of the play, and his relation to the other chief personages of the play, Emilia Galotti, Count Appiani, Orsina, Odoardo, and Marinelli. With the important exception of Marinelli no other character of consequence appears in the first act; the exposition overlaps into the second act where we are formally introduced to the Galotti family. Orsina, whose rôle, it is true, is but episodal, does not appear until the third scene of the fourth act. The character of the Prince is strongly presented;

that of Marinelli, however, as shown here, hardly prepares us for the part that he takes in the play that follows. We do not learn to know the man as he really is; we are led to believe that the prince is the more heartless of the two. We recognize Marinelli as a schemer, but can only surmise that his purposes are grimmer than they seem, while we are ready to expect anything from the prince who, caring only for diversion, would sign on sight the death warrant Camillo Rota presents to him, recht gern."

Of Edoardo we catch only fleeting glimpses in scenes II and IV of Act II. The attempt is made to put great emphasis on what Claudia calls his "rauhe Tugend" and on his home relations. He is represented as a domestic man who takes great comfort in his family and watches them with

a great deep jealous love that anxiously regards with suspicion every outside influence. In order to emphasize just this trait of character, the dramatist has rather forced an opportunity to present it. In other words, we can but feel that Odoardo is unreasonably exercised over his daughter's going out alone and over her meeting with the prince, or if we believe his agitation probable we must suppose that he is overshadowed by some awful foreboding of what is about to take place, a sixth sense which frequently surprises us in real life but which we give credence to only when forced to in real life and consequently accept with great reluctance in fiction. The task that Lessing undertook to do in writing Emilia Galotti was a monstrous one and it is remarkable not that he failed to create a wholly satisfactory

Odoardo, but that he succeeded so well in making a great effective tragedy.

Two scenes of the second act acquaint us with Emilia Galotti and we are quite prepared for the part that she takes in the play. She is presented in a somewhat less favorable light than Desdemona, but what weaknesses she shows are partly contingent upon lack of self-confidence and simple earnest faith in her mother.

The general difference between the two introductions is shown again in a comparison of the exciting force in the two plays. In Othello the exciting force occurring in the conversation of Iago and Rodrigo in the last scene of the first act, seems only a natural consequence of what has gone before and is developed gradually out of the relations between Iago and Othello. Iago has already sworn revenge upon Othello and the fact that his first plan of seeking satisfaction failed is no reason for his retracting.

Weaklings like Rodrigo may faintly give up, but not Iago. Iago's whole course is the result of cool deliberation. The reverse is the case with the unstable prince. The sudden announcement of Emilia's pending marriage with Cyprian rouses the prince from his passivity and he plunges forward into what he does not know, following without consideration where his impulses lead. With such a hero for the first half of the play, it was necessary to supply the forethought and ability for management that he lacked in the person of one of his subordinates. Marinelli compares favorably with Iago.

Both introductory acts close with the plan of the counterplay. Marinelli inwardly conceives his plot and only half revealing it to the prince, who is little concerned with the particulars so long as the result is assured, leaves him at once to put it into execution.

The prince lingers but is immediately seized with a resolution to see Emilia at the Dominicans. A short final scence, in which the impatient prince would sign unhesitatingly a death warrant, is added to show his state of mind. Iago, like Marinelli, makes no one his confidant, but makes sure of Rodrigo's aid. His plan of action laid, he leaves the stage and we await with ominous dread the rise of the curtain.

Both introductory acts are sharply cut off from the rest of the play: The second act of Emilia Galotti shifts the scene from the prince's palace to the Galotti home; the second act of Othello opens at a seaport in Cyprus The first scenes have much the same purposes: they show the happy conditions which are about to be disturbed by Iago and Marinelli. They permit us a moment's pleasant contemplation of the

the happy meeting of husband and wife after a short separation on sea, now reunited for a quiet enjoyment of peace and home, and of a father's visit home to take a hasty peep in upon the busy preparations for his daughter's wedding before going to his morning work. It is only a moment, however, for the counterplay is already in action. Even as he looks upon the beautiful meeting between Othello and Desdemona, Iago is able to exclaim with devilish pleasure:

"O, you are well tun'd now!
But I'll set down the pegs that make this music,
As honest as I am."

Then on the departure of Othello and Desdemona he holds conference with Roderigo, plotting the slip that shall procure Cassio's downfall. This is Iago's first real move in the action. From this on every moment

counts to his advantage. Scene III finds Cassio on the watch amid the revellies of the celebration of Othello's victory over the Turks and his nuptials. Iago appears and soon has poor Cassio too drunk to know himself. He himself pretends to be drinking to beat them all but in particular to keep sober. In the meantime his noisy singing and calls for wine seem to indicate a drunken hilarity; but it is not a hilarity owing to strong drink but an exuberance of spirits on seeing the distinction his own villainy is working. But a moment ago we saw noble Othello in the height of enjoyment; here we see in sharpest contrast his antitype in height of enjoyment; but one is a picture of light, the other of darkness; the one is uplifting, vivifying,

the other blasting. Nothing delights the devil so much as to make the good do evil. And this is why Iago is in the height of his glory as he loudly calls "Hold!" to the fighters he has set on. According to Iago's prearranged program, Cassio is discharged by Othello and Iago is left as Cassio's poor consoler. Iago knows how to seem to give comfort and in reality give the rankest poison and Cassio, unwittingly, falls into the trap, persuaded by Iago to take the very course which must prove his ruin. With Cassio's final assurance that he will try the means that Iago suggests and seek to regain favor with Othello through his wife, Iago has his plot pretty well under way and at the end of the second act we are not far off from the climax.

Similarly in the second act of Emilia Galotti our attention is quickly turned from the happy scenes with which the act opens. As Odoardo and Claudia disappear into another room, we are forced to listen to the conspiracy of Marinellis hired murderers. Odoardo is but barely gone, when Emilia rushes in in fright from the cathedral where the Prince has accosted her. This agitated scene in which we see the counterplayers already in action is followed by a second pretty family scene between mother and daughter and Appiani. The scene is introduced in order to present Appiani who appears here for the first time, and appears most favorably. But the agitation which we saw first in Odoardo and then in Emilia is repeated in Appiani. The next scene announces Marinelli and his proposition to

Asfiani constitutes the second stage in the rising action. The action of this act, it may be noted, deal chiefly with Asfiani, who is not of first rank importance, but may rather be considered one of the secondary characters, just as the intrigue of the second act of Othello is directed toward Cassio, a character of second rank, although of course the action eventually affects and is intended to affect the chief characters.

In Othello where the poet takes more time for his play, the third act does not open so abruptly on the counter-play in full action as in Emilia Galotti. In the latter the third act opens with a scene between Marinelli and the prince in which Marinelli reports his conversation with Asfiani and reveals his plan, and while they are still talking they hear the shots of Marinelli's hired murderers. In the scene that follows Angelo reports the results

of the plan and bids Marinelli make ready for Emilia who is being brought to the palace. The action rises rapidly to the climax, Emilia entering in the next scene in the company of Marinelli's hired servant. Marinelli receives her while the prince recovers himself sufficiently to burst himself again in her presence. The highest point is reached when just as Emilia learns to her great alarm that she is in the house of the prince the latter enters and she sees herself for the second time at his mercy and sinks before him. Already at the height of his success the prince shows weakness. His words to Emilia are sincere, however flattering they may seem, or however much flattery would seem to befit an intriguer in the prince's position: Hector can not in the presence of the suffering Emilia execute his plan.

In his wild madness to possess her he had thought no course would be hard for him that would lead to this desired end, but in experience he finds that courage fails him, and without the stronger will of Marinelli whose action is undisturbed by the perturbation of a heart or a conscience he would be unable to carry through his wretched project.

He leads her out and to Marinelli is left the more difficult charge of the mother who is already seeking for her daughter. Pallida brings Claudia in and the ensuing scene between her and Marinelli marks the beginning of the return movement. The sharp wits of the mother quickly put this and that together and see the net into which they have fallen. Marinelli's visit that morning to the count, the violent words which she overheard then say, the

apparent attack by robbers, the last words of the dying count, the princes meeting with Emilia at the temple, were a series of events of which it was not hard to discover the connection or the cause. Claudia pours out her wrath upon the perpetrator of her misfortunes who has no good weapons against such attacks. At the end of her violent accusations she hears the voice of Emilia in an adjoining room and rushes into the arms of her fainting daughter.

In Othello the act of the climax opens with an unimportant scene in which Cassio through Emilia seeks an interview with Desdemona in order to secure the latter's services in reinstating him in Othello's favor, and Iago superficiously offers to entertain Othello in the meanwhile. Then a short scene

between Othello and gentlemen as they depart from the castle, and then the long significant third scene opens with the unfortunate interview between Cassio and Desdemona. According to Iago's plan, he and Othello appear on the scene just in time to see Cassio take his departure from Desdemona at which his

"Ha! I like not that",

as if involuntarily uttered, stands that fatal train of thoughts buzzing through Othello's brain, never more to leave him peace. Slowly but with telling effect the heinous friend strikes in his foreminded suspicions and elevates each horrid, destructive thought with new evidence, all the time with great seeming of honesty and affection, appearing continually to keep back more than half his knowledge. Othello who but a while ago was ready to

stakes his life upon Desdemona's faith, feels his foundations begin to tremble - he steels himself against suspicion for a time, but even while denying that his faith in her has been shaken or his spirits dashed he feels that his peace of mind can never again be restored until he has positive proof of his wife's fidility. The height of the action is reached: Othello has begun to doubt; the work of Iago may not be done but he has already set in motion the tragic force which is soon to sweep everything before it.

Iago leaves Othello to his painful meditations. Desdemona who has waited for him in vain enters with Emilia to discover why he has forgotten his invited guests. Desdemona observes that something is wrong with her husband, and hearing that he has

a headache offers to bind his head with her handkerchief, but Othello lets it drop and goes out with Desdemona. This gives Emilia opportunity to steal the handkerchief for her husband. She enters at once and receives it from her. Iago can not have been gone half an hour but that is time enough for the throbbing thoughts in Othello's aching head to set him raging. Therefore entering and finding Iago he pounces upon him with all the vehemence his mind can devise and closes this most painful scene with a long interview with Iago in which the latter, still with that pretended unwillingness to be accuser and seeming wish to restrain the overreadiness of Othello to accept evidence, completes his lying testimony concerning Cassio and Desdemona; and Othello mentally

vows revenge, Iago swears to devote himself to Othello's service, Othello commissions him to make sure of Cassio's death, is ready to plan some means of death for Desdemona, and makes Iago his lieutenant.

This long carefully worked out scene with its slowly prepared climax and terrible conclusion greatly exceeds in painfulness and tragic import the corresponding scene in Emilia Galotti. The length of the scene may have considerable to do with it; although we consider the two scenes in which Emilia appears, namely III and IV, which would doubtless be thrown into one scene in Shakespere, as representing the third scene of Othello, we still have a comparatively short scene, the suffering victim is before us only a short time. Another point worthy of consideration is that Emilia is a comparatively silent sufferer: she

is too overcome with fright to give expression to her feelings. With all these things taken into consideration, however, we are still unable to account for the difference in the effectiveness of the two scenes without resorting again to the criticism that the calamity of the play of Emilia Galotti does not appear so inevitable as the characters seem to fear, we doubt the certainty of the result. Of course this is only saying in other words that the characters have not our full sympathy.

Both feels give something of relief in the scene that follows the climax, but it is a strangely different kind of relief. In Emilia Galotti it is that scene between Claudia and Marinelli in which we have the pleasure of seeing Marinelli get something of his

deserts from the sharp tongue of Claudia. It is a relief to us just as it is to the mother: we wanted to say just such things to Marinelli ourselves. In Othello, the relief is of less marked nature: the scene between Desdemona, Emilia, and the clown, following the dreadful close of the third scene, the petty wit of the clown is unable to lighten; it seems only to heighten the pathos of Desdemona's innocence; our minds are not distracted from the pitiable state she is in. In Emilia Galotti in our delight in seeing Marinelli outdone we can not help momentarily forgetting Emilia; while in Othello we are painfully aware of Desdemona's situation, the more so because she is so unconscious of it.

Moreover, instead of passing to a scene in which the suffering characters of the

opposition are still before us, we remain in the presence of the counterplay; — the fourth act opening with a scene between the Prince and Marinelli, in which the Prince demands explanation from Marinelli, only getting the satisfaction of being forced to acknowledge that his own interference, his own mixing is what has spoiled the game, — and are not brought again to the suffering players for six full scenes. In Othello from the point of the climax on, the two chief characters of second half are scarcely out of our sight. After the scene of the climax there follows one long varied scene which in Lessing's hand would have become four distinct scenes. It opens with the scene first spoken of between Desdemona and the clown. Then Othello enters and Desdemona again presses

the suit for Cassio; Othello asks for her handkerchief, Desdemona evades confessing that it is lost and refuses to talk but of Cassio until Othello in a rage dismisses her and exit. Cassio whom Desdemona has sent for thinking to obtain a favorable reception for him from her husband arrives but in such a mood as Othello has left her she can not present Cassio and bids him wait awhile while she goes to find her husband. While Cassio is thus left alone, Bianca, his mistress, appears and he gives her Desdemona's handkerchief, which he, owing to Iago's care, has found in his room, to copy the work on it and thus closer the scene.

The act of the return contains still some vigorous moves on the part of Iago, and Miss Woodbridge suggests that we consider the first scene as belonging properly to

the act of the climax. Iago is active throughout the act but so also is Othello. [is also.] The first scene opens with the third fatiful conversation between Othello and Iago. The former reports having heard Cassios confess and Othello falls into his epileptic fit. While Othello is unconscious, Cassio enters but Iago sends him out till Othello has recovered. When Othello comes to, Iago promises to give him opportunity himself to hear Cassio make confession and removes Othello to a convenient place where he may overhear Cassio's conversation with Iago. Iago then talks with Cassio of Bianca. The effect on the deceived Othello is maddening and he resolves upon Desdemona's death. Lodovico, bringing orders from the duke enters with Desdemona and attendants. Desdemona's unhappy remark about

Cassio brings Othello's wrath upon her and he strikes her in the presence of the whole company.

In the second scene Othello bids Emilia to learn what testimony she can add to that of her villainous husband. Believing that she is a lying accomplice to Desdemona's sin, he sends her away to bring Desdemona herself. She comes and he flings his unjust accusations at her but refuses to believe her honest denial, and leaves her stunned. Iago is called and gives his poor comfort. The women exeunt and Iago arranges with Rodrigo for Cassio's death. The last scene of the act between Emilia and Desdemona simply shows the ladies' purity of character and vague melancholy forebodings of evil.

The act of the return in Emilia

Galotti shows more weakining on the part of the counterplayers. The chief intriguer Marinelli, has as does Iago in the corresponding act of Othello, a very prominent place; unlike Iago, however, Marinelli's part seems to be rather a losing one. In the first scene where the Prince demands an explanation from him, he holds his own, forcing the prince to an acknowledgement that without his own interference, the impendent visit to the temple, Marinelli's plan might have been unsurmised. The second scene announces the untimely arrival of the countess Orsina. Marinelli is deputized to receive her and make proper disposal of her. This task, however, proves not an easy one and the prince, tired of the delay, decides to use his skill and hurrying out of the closet to which he had taken refuge he speaks a hasty greeting

to the countess and excuses himself without even stopping. Marinelli, however, is not so easily released. Orsina demands explanation. Unwisely he goes to far, for Orsina on the way to the palace has met the carriage bearing the body of Graf Appiani, reported to have been shot by robbers, and having already heard of the episode at the Dominicans she only needs to know that his bride, Emilia Galotti, is now being attended by the prince to see as clearly through the whole tragedy as Claudia herself had done. Marinelli is a second time outwitted.

The following scene, the sixth of the act, introduces, for the first time since the fourth scene of the second act, the hero of the play, the leader of the return movement.

Our attention is also here directed, after a considerable intermission, to the suffering characters of the exposition. Odoardo, meeting Orsina as she is going, is about to make his apology to her for entering so informally, when she directs him to Marinelli and learning or surmising that it is the father remains out of curiosity. Odoardo wishes to go straightway to his wife and daughter, but Marinelli judges it more prudent to announce him to the Prince. He attempts in vain, however, first to remove the countess and is finally obliged to go leaving Orsina alone with the father. As an only resort he whispers into the colonel's ear that Orsina is not in her right mind and her word therefore not to be trusted. That Marinelli should leave Orsina

alone with Odoardo, especially after the scene just passed is hardly consistent with the quick wit and cleverness which he has heretofore manifested in every emergency. But the two are left and Orsina assumes control of affairs to the end of the act. She tells the father all the horrid news, that his beloved count is dead, not only wounded; his daughter, "worse than dead," accosted by the prince at mass in the morning, and now at noon in his possession at his pleasure palace. The maddened father finds himself wholly unarmed. Orsina, who has come provided, thrusts her dagger into his hand. Claudia enters and confirms the painful report of the countess. Odoardo arranges to have Claudia return to the city with Orsina. The movement in

the last scenes is very rapid, and whatever may be said of the foregoing scenes, these scenes in which we see the rising agitation of the father are painful in an extreme degree. Orsina, although fairly actuated by sympathetic regard for the father, is also moved by an insane desire for revenge and to this end she seems to feel a sort of fiendish ecstasy in rousing the passion of the suffering father. The father quivers under her burning, racking words as if in physical torture.

The act of the catastrophe in Othello opens with a deed motived by both sides of the action. For it has been Iago's plan throughout to bring it about that the crimes he himself wished to commit to serve his own advantage should seem to be motived by some one else. Our once honest noble Othello

has been inveigled into accepting the responsibility. Roderigo, with Iago not far removed, lies in wait for Cassio as he comes from Bianca's dwelling. Roderigo misses his aim and receives a wound from Cassio. Iago from behind wounds Cassio in the leg and disappears. Othello hears the cry of Cassio and believes thinking he has commissioned done and slimes himself for his own. The cries of Cassio and Roderigo arouse Lodovico and Graliano and apparently also Iago who comes with a light, state Roderigo as the supposed villain who has wounded Cassio, lends his best helps to Cassio and jeeringly throws suspicion on Bianca.

The fateful second scene, opening with those famous lines, beginning:

"It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul",

which assume almost too much grandeur and calmness, rises and sinks through

all its varied degrees and kinds of pain from the height of the imagined impersonator of Justice to the depths of the bloodthirsty savage who seeks revenge for a personal wrong; and where Justice had intended to act, Anger asserts itself, usurpes the office, sits in judgment, and executes punishment.

The deed is done. Othello admits Emilia and soon sees the frailty and fidelity of his wife as quickly and easily proved as he had thought it disproved. Iago and others, roused by Emilia's cries, enter. Iago, who has up to this time shown no sign of weakening, is forced by Emilia to admit his villainous part in the terrible tragedy. Othello, perceiving how viciously he has been betrayed, makes a dash at Iago and he in retiring, in the hope of closing Emilia's

mouth, stabs her. The bitterness of the close of the scene is most pathetic; we can not forget that the Othello whose hands have just stopped the breath of the fair Desdemona is, though now fallen into the fanatical of a damned slave, the Othello whom we have loved. Believing himself bereft of love he had thought to retain honor by forswearing love, but finds both gone. The two had been his dearest possessions: at the loss of the one he had bid forever farewell to his occupation, to everything that gave interest to life; the loss of both unmans him. For a moment we are permitted to see the pitiful agony of the man as he discovers that he has through his own act sacrificed both when he thought to save one. But one painful comfort remains to him, that he did all in honor and naught in hate.

The act of the calamity in Emilia Galotti opens with a scene between Marinelli

and the former in which Marinelli still appears master of the situation; the former, however, shows signs of increasing weakness. Both realize that they are near the end of their game: Hettori sees nothing that offers a hopeful prospect; Marinelli is not yet ready to call the game lost. This is the way at least that he chooses to appear before the prince and it is consistent with his strong-willed self-confident nature; we have, however, in the last act no opportunity for a closer insight into the man; unlike Iago, he appears in no monologue, speaks no asides, and does not reveal himself to the spectator further than he does to the characters of the play. He says no word that indicates that he even reckons on the possibility of the failure of his plan; Iago, on the other hand, while just as vigorous in action

at the beginning of the final act as previously, is thoroughly aware that the success of his plan can not be guaranteed, and expresses this feeling in a soliloquy after the conversation with Roderigo at the beginning of the act and in an aside at the end of the first scene. This fact does not, of course, prove a weakness of character in Iago not found in Marinelli: Marinelli notwithstanding the unforesightedness of the prince has affairs more fully under his control than Iago has; until Cassio's mouth is stopped and Iago has full control over all the other important actors of the play he can not be sure of his ground. Each of the intriguers, however, relies chiefly, if not wholly, upon his own genius to make the outcome favorable to himself. The motive of Marinelli, though nominally the gratification of his friend's wishes, has in

the course of the action changed from being, in the first place, the satisfaction of a personal revenge to being, after the death of Appiani, mere self-preservation. In the beginning scene of the fourth act Marinelli condemned the prince's interference in his game and seemed to see in it possibly the ruin of the whole plan; here, however, he seems to feel no alarm over the affair, he seems to think either that Odoardo will not have the effrontery to raise such an accusation, or that if he does they will be able to meet it. It is the prince here that is apparently alarmed at the prospect.

In both plays the opening scene of the fifth act is between counterplayers; after the close of that scene the hero of the play is introduced to us by a monologue and from that point on he is continuously before us. The purpose of this monologue is to show the

state of mind of the hero:- in Othello it is an immediate preface to the calamity and serves to rouse us to a recognition of the old Othello of the first act and to cause us perhaps not to sympathize with him, but at least to soften somewhat the harsh judgment that we have passed against him and to entertain a more appreciative conception of his point of view; in Emilia Galotti the soliloquy does not immediately precede the calamity but it serves a similar purpose as the one in Othello: while in Othello where our affection for the hero has just been taxed to the very limit in the painful scenes of the fourth act and our sympathy is all but ready to give place to impatient condemnation, we need something to restore the losing sympathy which we in the beginning of of the play we accorded the hero; in Emilia Galotti the fact has not the

lack of reviving an interest that was once active, but rather of developing and enhancing one already present. Of the hero who does not appear for about the length of two acts and perevious to that came before us only twice, we need a further exposition before we are ready to appreciate the catastrophe. This short soliloquy, while it does not enable us to anticipate the calamity, confirms our original impressions of the honest father and emphasizes the motive of the catastrophe. He, like Othello, would be no common murderer; he would not murder for revenge: neither he nor Othello recognized that as a just cause for taking the life of another. The hot blood of Edoardo, heated to boiling by the shameless assault of the prince, impelled him to act of violence, and incited by the maddened countess duchess he believed himself ready for the deed,

but left alone with his better self, - the influences which had always hitherto dominated his life gaining the ascendency, - he sticks himself against yielding to the passion of revenge. Othello had maintained the same high ideals. In the delirium of passion after the climax, he, too, craves revenge and vows to give it; but bewitched by Iago, who knew Othello's better moments would not approve of such a motive, he is led to look upon the deed which he is about to commit as the execution of justice and the only way in which to vindicate his honor; and in the few calm moments that precede his awakening of Desdemona, he considers the deed not in the light of a gratification of revenge, but of the satisfaction of justice. He seems unconscious for the time of any other promptings; a charitable view of the case would hold that

he truly had no remembrance of the terrible threats of vengeance which he uttered while in the epileptic state and that he honestly believed himself actuated by no other motive than that of righting wrong and satisfying the claims of justice. Whoever believes the soliloquy sincere can scarcely escape this conclusion. The fact that afterwards Desdemona's forcible denial of the charges he makes against her arouses his passion, does not affect the case and he may with perfect sincerity say:

"O perjured woman! thou dost stone my heart,
And mak'st me call what I intend to do
A murther, which I thought a sacrifice."

Following the soliloquy of Odoardo is a scene between Odoardo and Marinelli. Marinelli, it will be remembered, had left Odoardo quite reluctantly, it seemed, to announce the father's presence to the prince and the inference would

naturally be, not that Marinelli simply wished to prepare the prince for the reception of the colonel because the two were not on agreeable terms, but rather that he thought it necessary to advise the prince as to his conduct toward the colonel. For no less urgent cause would Marinelli remove himself, leaving Odoardo with the countess. Since, however, Marinelli appears to have no special communication for the prince or advice to give him in the first scene of this act when he meets the prince, it may be supposed merely that he feared Odoardo would find the prince with Emilia and that not knowing under what circumstances he might find them he thought it prudent to give the prince due warning of Odoardo's arrival. There is just one objection to the latter view, and that is, if the announcement of Odoardo's arrival were all that were necessary why should Marinelli not have called a servant

to inform the ferince. We can not be expected to suppose that there were no servants at hand — if such were the case, it should not be left to inference merely; we should be definitely told that such was the case. However this may be, Marinelli, on returning, does not bring any word from the ferince, but on the contrary, at the end of a dispute over whether Emilia shall be taken to Guastalla or return with her father, he says,

„Der Prinz entscheide. Ich geh' und hole ihn,"

and again leaves Odoardo in order to see the ferince. On entering the room, Odoardo, who has perhaps overheard the ferince and Marinelli talking, asks,

„War meine Tochter hier?"

his inquiry being naturally first of all for his daughter, but the conversation turns too quickly on the subject of what shall be done with the daughter and he becomes so excited on perceiving Marinelli's determination that he shall consult the ferince's wishes in the matter, that he does not make a second inquiry for the ferince.

The monologue that follows, the second mono-

logue of Odoardo, is full of rising indignation over the highhandedness of the prince and his chamberlain, and Odoardo is again tempted to meet violence with violence, but calms himself once again as Marinelli returns with the prince. The attitude of the prince is conciliatory and Odoardo forces himself to assume a certain degree of civility. The prince chides Odoardo for sending his wife away with the countess instead of accepting his most willing hospitality and claims the favor of conducting Emilia to the city. Odoardo declines the favor saying that she shall not return to the city, that a cloister is the most fitting place for her in her condition. The prince, who has been unable to prepare himself against this feared outcome, can only hopelessly offer a weak protest at causing so much beauty to fade in a cloister, finally concluding, to the surprise of both Odoardo and Marinelli with the defeat confessing remark:

„Doch allerdings: dem Vater hat niemand eingeredet. Bringen Sie Ihre Tochter, Galotti, wohin Sie wollen."

The prince observes that Odoardo and Marinelli

exchange glances and asks explanation. Marinelli thereupon rouses himself to the help of his loving prince, and the play which comes so near a close at this point continues to its tragic ending. Marinelli, daring to misinterpret before the father the last word of the dying count as reported by Claudia, represents himself as especially chosen by Appiani to avenge his death and states that for that reason his friendship to Appiani forces him to ask in the prince a judge and demand of him a thorough investigation of the murder and inasmuch as it was whispered that Appiani was not killed by robbers but by a rival, in order to make a thorough investigation it would be necessary to retain Emilia herself and not only that but also the father and mother and furthermore, until such an investigation of the case could be made, not permit them to speak to one another. Odoardo is thoroughly awake to the cunning of the scheming counterplayers, and the man that has with such difficulty held himself under check up to this point thrusts his hand quickly into the pocket into which he had put Orsina's dagger, but the flattering words of prince, „Fassen Sie sich,

liber Galotti," bring him once again to his senses and he pulls out the hand empty. The prince adds to the distress of the father by saying that Emilia's confinement shall not be imprisonment but she shall be taken to the house of his chancellor, Grimaldi, where she shall be shown every mark of esteem. Odoardo, on the pretext of needing to explain to Emilia, who as yet knew not even of Appiani's death, why this separation from her father and mother was necessary, asks to be permitted to see her before he goes.

The following monologue, preceding the scene of the calamity suggests the similar one of Othello. The greater precipitation of the play of Emilia Galotti is noticeable here. Othello had time for reflection, time calmly to resolve upon his course of action. Odoardo suddenly finds himself hedged in by the enemy. He has little time to consider ~~places~~ of defense, to temper passion with reason. What he does must be done forthwith. The opportunity for action is about to close. The thought that is uppermost in Odoardo's mind is the rescue of his daughter from dishonor. In the first monologue his anger at the effrontery of the prince gave the desire for revenge the ascendency. The scene with Marinelli that follows it suggests the prince's

further intentions of keeping Emilia under his eye and adds flames to Odoardo's passion, and the raging "Jünglingskopf mit grauen Haaren" would like to thrust his dagger into the rascally knave who forebids to prescribe to him concerning his daughter, but Odoardo calms the old-boy. In the next scene things begin to take an even more serious turn. Real fear for his daughter mingles with the father's anger, he sees opening out for her nothing but a life of humiliation and dishonor, and in this last monologue he gropes darkly about for a means of rescuing her from such a fate, of saving her honor — her honor, in his mind the holiest possession of a human being. The thought of its being sullied maddens him. How gladly he would shield it from any impure touch! Why should he not yearn to remove her from all the sullying influences of this besullied world to the purer atmosphere of the world beyond! „Warum nicht?"

An unwonted chuckle escapes the crazed man as he thinks how complete a victory for him, how complete a defeat for the prince. The sound startles him himself, but brings him to his senses but a minute. An almost

heinous delight seems to come over him at the thought of this frustrating the cunning of the prince. Then the thought whether Emilia were worthy, whether she really were the pure girl that he conceived her to be gives a painful turn to his train of thought. "Was she worthy of what he was about to do for her?" The last words echo in his ear and with horror he puts away from him the thought that had offered itself as a way of escape. No, he will leave it to the power that has permitted her innocently to fall into the abyss to rescue her. With this conclusion he is about to go when he sees Emilia coming. It is too late to retreat. Odoardo feels the compulsion of an inevitable destiny: Providence seems to have wished his hand.

To the scene that follows, all the efforts of the past have been directed. In seven preceding scenes Odoardo has been constantly before us and all interest has been intent upon his action. For the final scenes Lessing cleared the stage of all secondary characters and concentrated attention upon father and daughter. The scene of the calamity, although almost too ornate, is a beautiful one. The agitation of the father and the resolute calm of the daughter as they meet are equally touching. Emilia, with her mother's delicacy of perception,

has comprehended the whole: she needs not be told of the death of Appiani; that the prince has planned her confinement causes her no surprise; only for her father's submission to it is she unprepared. She had expected to see every force of his being armed to resistance. And yet while expecting deliverance from him, she would not have him commit an act of violence against the impious offenders, would not have him sully his hands with their blood. She is not passionate. The nefarious scheme of the intriguers angers her, but she would never be carried away by that anger to an extent that she would desire the death of the villains. She is of as different a natural temperament from Orsina as Orsina's conduct is different from hers. She is naturally of a non-resistive, even-tempered frame of mind, unused to giving way to passion, and with a natural abhorrence of crime. Odoardo is of the same natural character; and had the deed of the prince concerned him less deeply or had it concerned himself alone, he would doubtless not have been even by the maddened Orsina roused to a desire for blood. His training and religion taught him to consider retribution beyond the sphere of the individual man. In his normal unimpassioned state, he believed in a retributive Justice, a Goodness and an Infinite Judge who avenges wrong and makes the right to conquer. Unlike Othello, he does not see in himself the tool of Destiny,

failed to be the divinely chosen executor of Justice. It is only in moments of frenzy that the natural passion of anger gains the ascendancy and thrusts faith into the background. It is owing to this struggle between the old man and the new man, as it were, of his nature, that the calamity is of just the sort that it is; the calamity is the result of an attempt to reconcile the two. The father, while saving himself from a complete yielding to the promptings of the first; in a measure satisfies it by a sort of retribution which frustrates the plans of the intriguers and deprives them in the surest way of an enjoyment of the fruit of their plans, at the same time preserving the honor of his daughter inviolate.

Odoardo appears in a two-fold embarrassment when he meets his daughter in Scene VII: he has just been passing through the horrid fancies of his third monologue; to meet her with his head still bursting with these thoughts but an unwonted strangeness between them; moreover, he has not before seen his daughter since her first meeting with the prince — Has she, perhaps, conceived some foolish sentiment for the worthless prince which she has concealed from her father? Is she the pure innocent girl that his ideal of her had caused him to believe

her to be? It is this agitation that Emilia sees, but that she does not will full correctness interpret; she could not think her father could doubt her, and she attributed his agitation partly to his despair of help; she could not know — and it was too harsh a thing for her to know — that her father was trying to steel himself for what seemed to him the only means of rescue for his daughter. Odoardo was unprepared to see his daughter so calm; the daughter whom he wished to believe Emilia to be, he had fancied, must be in extremest agitation; to him it seemed her composure must signify indifference, must signify what he had wished not to believe of her. How beautifully and naturally the fact makes Emilia unconsciously clear away the doubts of her father and reveal to him her strong, noble spirit — a daughter after Odoardo's own heart! Odoardo seems to fall in love anew with his daughter. He has only just discovered her. The painful circumstances of that painful day had revealed the heroic in her. She, however, experiences a disappointment in her father. She could not believe he would weakly submit to the prince's demands, but as already said,

she contemplated no criminal attack on the life of the prince. Her reply, when her father tells of how near he came to assassinating the prince and Marinelli:

„Um des Himmels willen nicht, mein Vater! Dieses Leben ist alles, was die Laster haben,"

is indicative of nothing but the most perfectly sincere and natural shock and is evidence that she had intended no such resistance or even thought of such a way of escape. Just as her father had been unable to see other means of escape for his daughter from the toils of the prince than the death of one or the other, and debarred, by compunctions of conscience, from the one, which could be motived only by hatred and desire for revenge, felt himself driven to the other in order to save the honor of his child; just so Emilia, without conceiving the possibility of the one, in her perplexity longs for death to put an end to her struggle and save her honor. She has shown a strong spirit, as Claudia testified, but she feels herself not unsusceptible to the subtle influences with which the prince befuddles her senses and overpowers her. The struggle against them is a resolute one but a difficult one and she would so gladly give it over.

She begs the dagger from her father's hand. But Odoardo finds himself incapable of the monstrous deed he had thought to have the heart to do, he has forgotten his intentions of but a moment ago and is now trying to restrain her from the very deed that he was about to do, with arguments quite the reverse of those that recently moved him. Yet this is the very reasons why the pleadings of his daughter stir him so deeply. Father and daughter are on the same footing: the father who has himself suffered so intensely all through the scenes of this act can well appreciate the daughter's agony; it pains him beyond endurance to be appealed to in vain: impulsively he grants her request, but no sooner is the dagger in her hand than he snatches it away in horror just in time to prevent her from plunging it into her breast. The dagger denied, ~~she turns must find~~ the same fear-face — she puts her hand to her hair and finds the rose, giving opportunity for that cruel thrust that so wounds the sore heart of Odoardo:

„Herunter mit dir! du gehörst nicht in das Haar einer — wie mein Vater will dass ich werden soll!" And then half bitterly she recalls the father who loved his daughter enough to be willing to take her life in order to save her honor, adding bitterly:

„Solcher Väter gibt es keine mehr!"

Moved to the depths, Odoardo impulsively lifts the dagger and thrusts it to her heart. The horrid deed which in a moment of madness he had conceived as possible is suddenly become a grim reality before him.

„Gott, was hab' ich gethan!"

escapes from the horrified man. The fainting Emilia, sinking into that repose for which she had longed, gives him answer:

„Eine Rose gebrochen, ehe der Sturm sie entblättert. Lassen Sie mich küssen, diese väterliche Hand."

And thus has Lessing carefully arranged every detail of this scene of the calamity. He fully realized that in it lay the crucial point of his drama, that without the most skillful treatment his play would here fail

to hold the interest and sympathy of the spectators. The preceding monologue of Odoardo, moreover, to the ordinary spectator must be rather repellant. Would the ordinary spectator rise to sympathy with the frenzied father or would he impatiently cry him down? Evidently relief was necessary at this point; the tension must be loosened. Had Lessing made Odoardo precede straightway from the scene of the monologue to the murder of Emilia, he would not have found a spectator who would have tolerated his hero. But even as we leave the tragic scene of the monologue, the dramatist rewins our love for Odoardo, reinstating him in our favor in order to fit us for the catastrophe. He makes Odoardo seemingly quite forget his rash purpose and finally commit the deed only in an impulsive, almost involuntary response to Emilias appeals. The horror that attaches to the character of the father is thus softened by a pathos, and what would otherwise be only repulsive in its gruesomeness is now painful.

The closing scene of Emilia Galotti does not, as does that of Othello, introduce all the characters who have have any considerable part in the play; only the two chief characters of both parts of the play are seen in the last scene. The prince and Marinelli entering find Emilia in the arms of her father. In the presence of the prince all the emotions which stirred Odoardo during the preceding scenes return to him, but he maintains his self-control and meets the prince with a haughty half defiant air. To the latter's questions: „Was ist das? Ist Emilia nicht wohl?" he replies significantly: „Sehr wohl, sehr wohl!" Exclamations of horror follow from the prince. Marinelli involuntarily ejaculates, „Weh mir!" for he realizes too well the frustration of his cunningly wrought plans.

„Grausamer Vater, was haben Sie gethan!" the prince exclaims and Odoardo answers him in the words that Emilia has taught him: „Eine Rose gebrochen, ehe der Sturm sie

entblättert. War es nicht so, meine Tochter?"
he adds in appeal to his child in his arms
and she, like the dying Desdemona, not wish-
ing that her father should bear alone the guilt
of the awful crime which must, she realizes,
look grim enough to the eyes of others, she replies,
"Nicht Sie, meine Vater — Ich selbst — ich selbst."
But Odoardo, like Othello, having done naught
in hate but all in honor, is willing to face the
jeering cries of his condemners, and turning to
the prince, who, he firmly believes, must in the
final settlement of all things answer for the
life of Emilia, he surrenders himself into his
hands as his earthly judge, but after that,
he says, he will await him before the Judge
of all.

Lessing and Shakspere both have seemed to
wish to make their tasks easier by removing their characters, as
we have noticed, somewhat away from the spheres of their ordinary
readers and spectators, taking advantage of that principle that
we are more ready to believe the unusual of that which is strange
to us than of that which is familiar. We are not conscious, of

course, of being influenced by this device, and it is doubtful if it does have any weight with us or change in any appreciable way our feelings toward the plays. As we have seen, we can hardly think of Odoardo and Emilia as other than Germans; Othello and Desdemona do not appeal to us as foreign; and yet in that wider sense in which distinctions of race and nationality are lost in the universal type of common humanity the characters of both plays appeal to us as truful delineations of human nature. The characters are such as can be read by the light of our personal experience; and even that which transcends our experience is so carefully presented that we scarcely realize where our sympathy is prompted by real experience and where by mere imagination. To say all this is merely to repeat the truism that Shakespeare and Lessing are great delineators of character.

Othello and Odoardo are unique characters in fiction. There have been jealous husbands before, and there have been jealous fathers. There have been heroes who have loved honor and died for it. Husbands have killed their wives and fathers, their daughters. But we have only one Othello and only one Odoardo. Only

Shakespeare has dared to attempt an Othello; noble, grand, even in his degradation, magnificent. And only Lessing has dared, in modern times, to create an Edoardo, manly, honorable throughout.

No character in fiction has been more completely conceived than Othello. Yet the presentation of the character is not elaborate. Our acquaintance with the Moor comes about very naturally, but rapidly. Our attention is at once directed, in the very beginning of the play, toward the one about which it centers, but through the foul lips of the villain Iago. We recognize immediately that we can not trust the words of Iago and picture the Moor, accordingly, in a much more favorable light than the words of Iago would seem to admit of. Indeed, while slandering his general Iago is made to pay him quite a tribute: "Another of his fathom", he admits, "they have none to lead their business". From such introduction - a general alleged by his jealous officer whom he has failed to honor, to be selfish, partial, unjust, and unwise; dubbed "thick lips", "devil"; described as a "knave of common hire",

a gondolier", "a lascivious Moor" who has robbed a venerable old senator of his daughter — from such an introduction in the first scene we pass to the second where we see Othello in person. Six words could hardly have been better chosen to introduce the true character of the Moor to us and answer the echo of those accusing voices of the first scene. The Iago whom we have just heard jesting now returns from the mischief he has been plotting with Roderigo to take up his other game of throwing "shows of service" on his lord. He is assuming the part of "honest Iago" this time and pours out angry words against the poor duped Roderigo. With well feigned sincerity he continues his tirade:

"Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it the very stuff of conscience
To do no contrived murther; I lack iniquity
Sometimes to do me service. Nine or ten times
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs".

Othello's quiet response is better than volumes to reveal to us the hero that is before us: "'Tis better as it is".

The words not only show us a disposition not easily provoked and not given to revenge — in itself a keynote to his character — but also show us that he is thoroughly honest and sincere and perfectly sure of his ground — he has done nothing rashly or hastily or nothing which he wishes to retract or of which he is unwilling to face the consequences. The speech thus reveals not only his usual evenness of temperament but also his high sense of honor and respect. He was fully prepared against all that Rodrigo could stir up against him. He knew that he should have to meet the temporary anger of Brabantio, but knowing that he had the love of Desdemona he believed to have have done no wrong and to be able to justify himself in what he had done. His second speech confirms the sincerity and honesty manifested by the first and shows in addition the simple modesty of the man. Up to this time he had kept silent in regard to his birth and rank, simply because there

had been no special reason for making it known, but now if birth and rank will in the eyes of men seem to better his claims, he was willing to make known his lineage.

And thus we come to know Othello. These and the beautiful speeches ~~of~~ before the council-chamber before the duke and senators, which are hardly too beautiful although the modest general calls himself "rude in speech" and "little blest with the soft phrase of peace", present Othello as he was before Iago had played havoc with all the forces that preserved the equilibrium of his life, his faith, his love, his honor. Yet it is not hard to understand how so great a change come over him. A character such as his would naturally succomb to such attacks as Iago made. And indeed Shakespere prepares us for just this weakness in Othello's nature. We learn early in the play that his experience has not fitted him for dealings with unmistworthy men; he has had struggles with the forces of nature rather than with the wiles of men, and his very simple confidence in the false Iago

is evidence of this unsophisticatedness, though we must never place too much stress upon this point — we must always remember that Iago was an artist in villainy and not regard Othello as foolishly stupid because he was not clever enough to see through Iago. After all, it was not a great or marvelous change that came over Othello. His standards do not change. He is throughout the same honor-loving man. It is only that under the shadow of a monstrous misconception he sees what he has believed to be the very foundations of right disjointed and trembling, he sees where he thought to find the sweetest harmony and rhythm confusion and discord, all without that touches upon his life has suddenly become corrupt and loathsome, yet he knows in his heart he is pure, amid all this heretofore undiscovered filthiness he has lived honor-bright. Is it for him to tolerate this condition? Is it for honor to yield to dishonor? or for purity and nobility to give up the field? In the delirium of epilepsy he cries for revenge, for blood to

satisfy his rising passion. But the spell passed and the true Othello back again, the thought that pushes him to action is that of righting wrong, of satisfying justice. And if his burst-ing head thinks not clearly, need we lose sym-pathy for him and say, "This is not the Othello of the first act!" I believe with Coleridge and Furnbull that they who see Othello turn into a mere jealous madman have not half ap-preciated Othello's character. That Othello is wholly unsusceptible to the passion of jealousy under so great provocation, is unthinkable, but a per-son who can not conceive of the possibility that any other emotion should enter into his heart must find some difficulty in recon-ciling the two parts of the play. Ulrici prop-erly analyzes his character when he says, that "love and honor are the very foundations of his life." He had not sacrifised his honor when love came into his life nor was he ready to give up his one remaining stay when love went out of his life.

In the character of Odoardo we find no strange extremes of action to reconcile. At no time in the play do we see Odoardo in perfect quiet, and the vague agitation which he seems to feel in the beginning of the play rises continually to the close. The task of the poet, perhaps, seems at first thought equally difficult in the two: the deed of Othello, however, is more easily motived than that of Odoardo because the former may act on the supposed guilt of his wife while the latter knows his daughter to be innocent and undeserving of death. Thus while Othello acts on the grounds of justice and honor, Odoardo commits the deed for the sake of the honor of his daughter, in his despair believing it to be his only means of rescuing her. I think therefore that it is Lessing that has the more difficult task. Shakspere has devoted much time to the presenting of Othello's character. In Emilia Galotti which is a third shorter than Othello,

Lessing, strangely enough, does not introduce Odoardo till the second act, the first act directing attention toward the Prince, who is really of less interest in the play than Marinelli and toward Emilia who also does not appear in the first act and who is in any case second to her father in interest[1]. Notwithstanding this, however, and the fact that our introduction to Odoardo in the second act is very lastly, we are given in the play a very clear and in all complete conception of the chief personage of the play. What is given in the second act is quite sufficient to enable us to understand the Odoardo of the fourth and fifth acts. He is seen here only in the the company of his wife but his thought and their conversation center upon the daughter whom he loves so heartily and so jealously. It is this love which has wakened him so early and brought him to the house before business hours in order that he might assure himself that everything was in readiness for the happy wedding. His

1 Cf. note on p. 41.

dislike of the prince is a second feature to be emphasized, and finally the spirit which permeates his whole conversation with Claudia and which she is pleased to call his „rauhe Tugend", the same that inspired Othello, a reverent unmixed love of ~~family and honor~~.

Thus both heroes are greatly conceived. They answer to the famous dictum of Aristotle that requires that the tragic hero be a person of eminence. Both Othello and Odoardo are great by nature and it is doubtless this sort of greatness that the philosopher means — in his day it had to be sought among persons of rank for they were the only persons whom the great issues of life touched and who could receive the common sympathy of the people; today the modest general of Moorish race and the simple, home-loving colonel can, by virtue of the nobility character, hold our interest and sympathy and the representation of their struggles purge our passions by pity and fear.

Shakespere has enunciated no theory of the drama. We know his theory only by his written product. Othello, however, submits itself well to an analysis on Aristotelian principles. The character of the hero is strongly moved, the struggle is a fierce one, and its result follows as a natural outcome, an outcome inevitable to the character of one who esteemed honor so highly, whose trust in mankind was so simple, so untaught, who, though of a certain modesty that forevents him from thrusting himself forward, or preferring himself before others, is, in the well chosen words of Turnbull, impiously self-reliant; in matters which concern him, which come under his control he feels himself the sole executor of justice. This impious self-reliance is the weakness that caused the noble Othello to fall. It is the perfect sincerity and conscientiousness of the character throughout that holds our sympathy all through the almost revolting scenes of the fourth and fifth acts and

makes his end so tragic and so painful.

Lessing, unlike Shakespeare, has clearly set forth his dramatic theory. His expression of dissatisfaction over Emilia Galotti may be taken as evidence that this play did not, in his eyes, meet the requirements of his theory, and the play does present difficulties. The character of Emilia herself is much more satisfactory dramatically than that of Odoardo and might therefore be well regarded as truly the tragic character of the play, and therefore the chief personage, rather than Odoardo. But as has already been shown [p. 41] there can be no doubt but that Lessing intended the father to be of chief interest. The question then arises, Did he intend Odoardo to appear to us as a tragic character. We can not recognize in the calamity that overtakes him any inevitable necessity, or a misfortune which he has brought upon himself by faults of his own; up to the time of the calamity he has been unblameable — all that we could possibly lay to his charge is

his stupidity in accepting seemingly without question the death of his daughter as the only means of escape for her. It is only with the greatest difficulty that Lessing holds the sympathy of the spectators for his hero at this point, and though we rise to the emotions of the impassioned half-crazed father who loved the honor of his daughter above all earthly things the sight of his misfortunes can hardly awaken in us the pity and fear which tragic action is said to awaken — our interest in the character would probably be described in Aristotelian language as philanthropic, inasmuch as our pity is unmingled with fear for ourselves. Beautifully as the character of Edoardo is delineated, it is not in the true sense of the term a strong tragic character.

However much Lessing may have neglected to provide for the motiving of the calamity as far as the hero is concerned, he seems to have carefully fixed the tragic guilt of the heroine. We see Emilia the

victim of her weakness. She errs on the opposite side from that Othello does. Her fault is too little reliance on the promptings of her own conscience. She is inclined to accept the opinions of others as to what is right concerning her, especially where the course advised is the easier to follow. She recognizes her guilt when she learns of the death of Agrippina:

„Und warum er tot ist! Warum!"

Had she told Agrippina of the impious affronting of the prince in the morning, doubtless the wretched plans of the prince and his counsellor would have been frustrated and Emilia would never have fallen into their power. Up to this point she is responsible: a definite series of events appear to lead up to the inevitable result, the success of the counterplay. The weakness of the drama comes in the fact that Emilia's death does not appear to be the necessary end of the action. Both leading characters show a blamable lack of courage which is hardly consistent with the strength of character which they have previously shown. Odoardo has been represented as a man in whom we

could have confidence and whom we would expect to throw back evil doers with a strong hand; moreover, we demand of any man a certain strength and courage. As to Emilia although she is the "most resolute of her sex" — and she does show considerable strength of character in the presence of the prince — we are not surprised that her courage slackens and yields to despair, but of Odoardo we expect a more manly courage. His weakness of character in the tragic scene lessens the tragic effect and mars the magnitude of the action. For this reason the drama can rise to no such heights of tragedy as Othello. It is hardly sufficient for the ends of tragedy that Odoardo kills his daughter out of caution or impulsively in a burst of feeling.

Standing before the painting of a real artist, we see neither paint nor canvas. We seem suddenly endowed with a spiritual vision so deep, so refined, so significant, that transcends our natural sight as the spirit transcends body. And thus

when we look upon these two pictures:
we see not with the ordinary sight
of men, but with a purer, more
perfect vision, we behold the hid-
den unity and awful inner con-
nections of life, and perceive the
infinite order and beauty of the
Great Plan in which all is
wisdom and goodness.